THE MARYLAND YELLOWTHROAT

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Some Unanswered Questions About Maryland Birds

Over the last two decades of birdwatching in Maryland and during the course of working on the Maryland/DC Breeding Bird Atlas Project a number of questions about birdlife in Maryland have surfaced. This is the first in a series, where we will present questions that can be researched or investigated by any birdwatcher or group of birdwatchers in Maryland. Many will be extremely difficult to resolve, and some need only the effort. One question will appear in each issue of the *Yellowthroat.*

If you have information that will help resolve any of these questions, please send it to Bob Ringler who writes the season report for *Maryland Birdlife.* His address is: 6272 Pinyon Pine Ct., Eldersburg, MD 21784 or to me at 1618 Somerville Road, Bel Air, MD 21014. Better yet, consider compiling the information into an article for *Maryland Birdlife.*

Rick Blom

What is the status of Common and Red-throated Loons along the coast in winter? In the files of *Maryland Birdlife* there are almost no reports of loons during the months of January and February. Is this because the loons reported on the Christmas Counts leave, or because there is so little observation along the coast during this period? Do the hundreds of loons reported on the Ocean City count every year move on, or are they supplemented by even more birds from the north?

The solution lies in some effort to systematically count loons at Ocean City during the winter months, being sure to distinguish between Red-throated and Common when possible. We could make a start on this problem with only a few counts during one winter, but the real resolution will probably require several years of data.

The reason to make every effort to separate the two species is so that we find out if one leaves and the other stays, or some similar (though unexpected) result. There is no such thing as too much data. Birds too far away or flying too fast for certain identification, should be put down as "loon sp.".

Though loons may be seen at any time of day, the best time to catch them is usually early in the morning, when large numbers may be seen flying, sometimes north and sometimes south. We don't know if these birds are actually travelling some distance, or just moving from one feeding area to another. The inlet at Ocean City and Assateague Island are generally the best places to see loons from.

DNR Reports. . .

This time last year, I introduced you to The Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund, Maryland's tax checkoff for restoring the Bay and conserving nongame and endangered species. Last year was the first for this checkoff.

I am happy to report this year that the amount donated far exceeded our expectations. Over $964,000 were donated by more than 83,500 taxpayers. Montgomery County donated the highest amount with $258,000, Howard had the highest contribution rate 3.9%. Statewide, the average amount donated was $11.54, with Calvert County leading all counties with an average contribution of $15.17. Not bad for our first year.

We are the 34th state to have an environmental tax checkoff, and second only to New York in total contributions in the first year. Now that the checkoff was a success, new challenges are upon us. Maintaining the success of our first year is an obvious challenge. Spending the proceeds wisely is another.

Half of the net proceeds goes to the Chesapeake Bay Trust, while the other half comes to the DNR. The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a non-profit organization established to promote public participation in the restoration and protection of the Bay. The Trust provides grants for qualified activities to civic groups, community associations, schools, other non-profit organizations, etc.

Of the half coming to the DNR, half goes to the Natural Heritage Program and the other half to the Nongame and Urban Wildlife Program. Increased public education is one pursuit both programs will be using checkoff monies for. An additional biologist will be hired by both programs to conduct needed inventory and research activities which we were unable to pursue prior to the availability of checkoff monies.

Some of the projects the Nongame and Urban Wildlife Program will pursue include determining the status of barn owls in Maryland, studying impacts of certain forestry practices on forest interior breeding birds, developing conservation programs for grassland nesting birds, determining urban citizens' needs and desires for wildlife in urban environments, providing educational workshops on a variety

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Membership and Board of Directors Meetings

During the annual conference held at Frostburg State University, the general membership and the Board of Directors both met on June 3, 1989. Following are some highlights of the two sessions.

Special Awards Presented. The MOS Valued Service Award, which was created to be given to members who have volunteered countless hours of work for the Society, was presented to four very deserving persons: Gladys Cole, Richard Kleen, Charles Mason and Robert Ringler.

Mark Weatherholt was awarded an MOS wrist watch in recognition of his able service as conference chairman. Artist Roy Brown's striking conference pen design earned him a gift certificate.

Financial Matters. Treasurer Emily Joyce reported that the Society is solvent, with just over $141,000 in the combined funds. The operating fund is over budget, but should come around during the next year. Don Donnald's volunteer tax work was praised by Mrs. Joyce.

Complete reports of the committee chairmen, which will be published in *Maryland Birdlife,* are synopsized here:

Atlas. Coordinator Eirik Blom stressed the fact that although the project is moving along, many of the species accounts are overdue. The committee is seeking corporate sponsorship and donations. Two new members of the committee are: Joanne Solem and Jane Farrell.

Budget. Because of illness, Chairman Charles Mason had not been able to prepare a budget for fiscal year ending April 1990. The budget presented in April 1988 will be used until the Committee can prepare an amended report. Norman Chamberlin will serve as chairman.

Bylaws. Lee Meinersmann recommended that the size of the Board be reduced to one director only from each chapter, thus giving each chapter an equal vote.

Conservation. Chairman Richard Dolesh presented highlights of issues which are of interest to the Society: (1) The closing of Fort Meade Base will leave many acres declared as surplus. The flood plains and

(continued on page 2, column 1)

(Board News, continued from page 1, column 3)

mature deciduous woods adjacent to Patuxent need to be kept as open space. (2) The American Heritage Trust Fund (Udall Bill) is under consideration in the 101st Congress. (3) The Ocean City Beach Replacement Project will be taking sand from Assateague. (4) The Potomac River dredging project will go from Alexandria to Marshall Hall. Mr. Dolesh thanked members who have written letters in response to past issues and urged continued attention to vital conservation matters.

Education. The impressive 1989-1990 Speakers List, compiled by Chairman James Cheevers and his committee, is available for chapter use. The Society is urged to encourage students to strive for the Junior Achievement Award by submitting birding-related projects to science fairs.

Library. Consolidation of back issues of *Maryland Birdlife* is underway at Cylburn, thus making requests for those issues easier to fulfill. The Maryland State Library Resource Center will bind a complete set of *Birdlife* and make it available throughout the state on interlibrary loan. Chairperson Joy Wheeler represented MOS at the Fourth Annual Natural Resources Fair of the Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Educators and reports that the portable display was well received and that several people requested additional information about MOS programs.

Long-Range Planning. Joanne Solem and her committee have been working with Mr. Dolesh to find ways to increase MOS visibility. She reported a good feedback from chapters on a great number of publicity methods which have been compiled and sent to chapter presidents.

Publications. Bob Ringler, reporting for Chan Robbins, said that *Maryland Birdlife* is coming ever closer to being current. Contributions of articles will be welcome.

Research. Chairperson Karen Skuldt announced three grants this year: David Brinker and Joan McKearnen: "Migration of Saw-Whet Owls through Finzel Swamp," $500. Sam Droege and Russ Greenberg: "Study of Brackish Marsh Swamp Sparrows," $270. Frank Rohwer: "Timing of Breeding in Birds," $230. The deadlines for grant applications have been moved to August 1 and February 1.

Sanctuary. Dotty Mumford was pleased to announce the acquisition of a new Garrett County sanctuary, obtained through The Nature Conservancy from the family of the late Caroline Wilson. The Irish Grove Sanctuary will forever remain a natural area due to an easement deed with the Maryland Environmental Trust that was signed December 27, 1988. All of the sanctuaries are now protected under one master insurance policy.

The Committee is evaluating recommendations made by Harford Chapter

(DNR, continued from page 1, column 2)

of topics, and much more.

Hopefully, the blend of projects will appeal to the variety of people who donated, as well as those who will hopefully donate in the future.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you who contributed to our first year's success, either through donating to the Fund or passing the word around to your friends and family. Thanks!

Glenn Therres

MILL CREEK WORKDAY

A workday is scheduled for 8 a.m.-until, on September 23 at the Mill Creek Sanctuary, Route 662, 2 miles south of Wye Mills. Gloves, hammer and shovel would be useful. Inquiries can be made to Jan Reese 745-2875.

Jan Reese

Cole Tribute

Birding and banding friends of Gladys Cole have been working on a memory book for her. If you wish to be included just write something you recall about Gladys. Use regulation size notebook paper, 3-ring, plain or lined; front and back. Draw a picture, add a photograph or even a feather if appropriate. Your page will be encased in a plastic cover and added to the binder which was already presented to Gladys. There is still plenty of space, and she will enjoy hearing from you. Send to her at 625 Valley Lane, Towson, MD 21204.

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concerning the future of tum Suden after the Atlas project no longer needs the use of the house.

Scholarship. Mildred Gebhard announced the winners of the ornithology and ecology scholarships. Their names will appear elsewhere in *Birdlife*. Two of the recipients attended the Conference: Kathryn Lauver, second grade teacher at Timber Grove Elementary School and Beth Olson, ecology teacher at Harford Community College.

Nominations. Outgoing chairperson Helen Ford thanked her committee for assembling the slate of officers for 1989-1990. The slate was unanimously accepted: President - John Malcolm; Vice President - Richard Dolesh; Treasurer - Emily Joyce; Secretary - Patricia Moore.

Outgoing President Robert Ringler was given a round of applause in appreciation for his two year's service. He expressed his pleasure in working with the Society, and added that some of his goals had been accomplished, but that there was much to be done. He requested that President-elect John Malcolm be supported during his time in office.

Patricia J. Moore
MOS Secretary

SANCTUARY COMMITTEE REPORT

New Sanctuary

The MOS has a new sanctuary in Garrett County. This sanctuary was obtained through The Nature Conservancy from Robert L. Wilson to be a memorial sanctuary for his aunt, Caroline W. Wilson. The property is 85.5 acres in the Altamont section of Garrett County, south of Deep Creek Lake, at the headwaters of the Little Youghioghany River. Most of the sanctuary is woodlands with five streams crossing the property. About a fourth of it is wetlands. Birds found on the MOS Conference field trip to the sanctuary included a hen Turkey with young, Alder Flycatcher, and Golden-winged Warblers. A site guide for this sanctuary will be published in a future copy of the *Yellowthroat*.

Changes at Mill Creek

There are some changes being made at Mill Creek Sanctuary. The access trails to the sanctuary near the bridge are being closed. This is being done in the hopes of discouraging beer parties that are held there. Also, the trail to the dam area, east of the road, goes through some patches of delicate wild flowers. The foot traffic is harming these plants.

New trails are being built to access the sanctuary from the off-the-road parking lot located south of the bridge area. The parking lot is at the top of the rise, behind a metal gate, on the west side of Route 662.

The transition from old to new trails is being done in a series of work days. Two have already been held—one each in June and August. We need more workers to speed this work along. If you can spare some time to help in these work days, please call Jan Reese, (301) 745-2875.

Irish Grove Workday

The annual fall workday at Irish Grove is scheduled for November 4, 1989. Among the projects to be done are put a new roof on the tool shed, build a bridge on the North Trail, cut and mark new trails, and build a new gate. In order to complete these projects we need lots of volunteers. As well as getting much needed work done, there is good food provided by the Wicomico Chapter and excellent birding. For those who desire to spend the night, there is usually a slide presentation in the evening and more birding on Sunday. So, mark it down on your calendar and come join in the fun.

Spring Workdays

The dates for Spring workdays are as follows:

Irish Grove — April 7, 1990
Carey Run — April 28, 1990

Dotty Mumford

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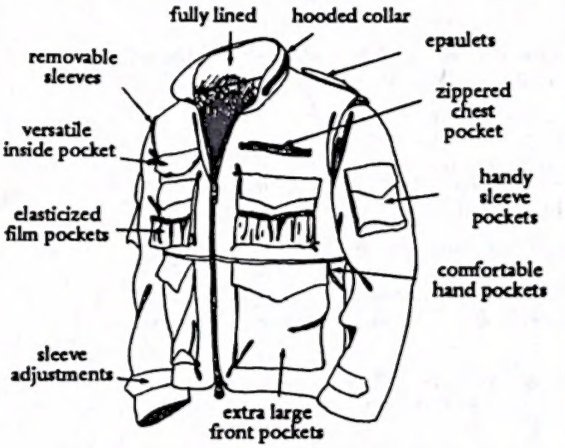

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1989 Tours:	September 9-10	Cape May -- Migration Mainline
	September 23-24	Hawk Mountain -- River in the Sky
	November 11-18	Trinidad -- Tropical Birding

For information about any tour or for references from other M.O.S. members, please write to **Peregrine Enterprises, P.O. Box 1003, College Park, Maryland 20740** or call collect at **301-474-1880.**

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MOS Calendar September/November 1989

Saturday, September 23

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Meyer's Station Road, Anne Arundel Co. Confusing fall warblers and more. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Annapolis Mall Park & Ride lot, 1/2 day. The leader is Emily Joyce, 923-6053.

Sunday, September 24

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Sycamore Landing & Hughes Hollow. Migrant warblers and possible shorebirds and "grasspipers." Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Sycamore Landing parking lot, next to the canal. 1/2 day. The leaders are Dave Czaplak, 328-8504, and Mary Ann Todd.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Dick Kleen. Breakfast hosts are Linda & Paul Makosky. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Tuesday, September 26

MEETING. Patuxent. 7:45 p.m., First Floor Conference Room Bldg. 011A (3 stories, slit windows on north edge). US Ae Res. Center, Rt. 1, Beltsville.

MEETING. Washington. "Hawk Identification" 7:30 p.m., Funkstown Elementary School, Funkstown, MD.

Saturday, September 30

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Muddy Run. Meet at the upper parking lot of Conowingo Dam (just off Rt. 1 on Shuresville Rd.) at 8:00 a.m. All day, bring lunch. Coordinators are June Vaughn, 838-4427, and Beth Olsen, 717-456-5067. A great trip for novice birders and anyone wishing to improve their identification skills.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Point Lookout State Park. Migrant hawks and landbirds at Western Shore concentration point. Meet at point, near Coast Guard Building at 8 a.m.; bring lunch. The leader is Paul O'Brien, 424-6491.

Sunday, October 1

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Jeff Effinger. Breakfast hosts are Eric & Ginny Graeber. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Friday, October 6

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "The Birds of Alaska," by Robert F. Ringler. Hosts/Hostesses: Terry & Mike Banz, Frank & Effie Dawson. 8 p.m. at the Anne Arundel County Library at 1410 West Street in Annapolis.

Saturday, October 7

FIELD TRIP. Jug Bay. Chincoteague NWR, VA. Tentative meeting place to be announced.

Sunday, October 9

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Lester Coble. Breakfast host is Dick Kleen. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Friday-Sunday, October 6-8

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Cape Charles Weekend with Harry Armistead.

Saturday-Monday, October 7-9

FIELD TRIP. MOS Columbus Day Coastal Trip. Meet at 9 a.m. at Bombay Hook NWR Visitor Center. Birding will move south to Chincoteague as weekend progresses.

Tuesday, October 10

MEETING. Kent. "Wildflowers Through the Season," by Trish Gerber.

Thursday, October 12

MEETING. Howard. "A Friendly Look at the Bat World," by Edwin Gould of the National Zoo. 7:30 p.m. at Longfellow Elementary School, Columbia, MD.

MEETING. Talbot. "Ticking and Twitching," by Larry & Jean Frye. 7:30 p.m. at the Loyola Federal Savings Bank, Harrison & Goldsborough Sts., Easton, MD.

Saturday, October 14

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Rocks State Park. Excellent birding spot with emphasis on migrating fall warblers. Meet at the 4-H Camp off Rt. 24 on Cherry Hill Rd. at 8 a.m. Beginning birders will enjoy this beautiful Harford County location. 1/2 day. Coordinators are Tom Congersky, 678-6489, and Joe Vangrin, 838-5264.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Harmony Hall & Broad Creek, Prince Georges Co. Field bird habitat at peak of sparrow migration. Large waterfowl concentration at Broad Creek on the Potomac. Reservations only, check with the leader in advance for possible date change. The leader is Paul Pisano, 685-3790.

Sunday, October 15

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Search For Sparrows. University of Maryland farm and Centennial Park. Meet at 6:30 a.m. at Grempler Realty parking lot, Columbia, MD. 1/2-day trip. The leader is Scott Atkinson.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Harry Armistead. Breakfast hosts are Donna Stone & Jean Crump. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Wednesday, October 18

MEETING. Jug Bay. "Birds of East Africa," by Dr. Donald Messersmith. 7 p.m. at Patuxent River Park.

Saturday, October 21

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Potomac River Boat Trip. Take a super pontoon boat tour of the Potomac River with Greg Kearns. The hydrilla mats are feeding ground for many waterfowl during this migratory period. Limit of seven people, Harford Chapter members only. Meet at 5:30 a.m. at the Rt. 152/I-95 Park & Ride. All day, bring lunch. Call Don Soubie, 676-9386, for reservations. The co-leader is Chris Rok.

Sunday, October 22

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Tuckahoe State Park, Queen Anne & Caroline Counties. Bald Eagles and river otters. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Annapolis Mall Park & Ride lot, bring lunch. The leader is Sue Ricciardi, 647-9513.

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Centennial Park & Lake for fall migrants. Meet at 8 a.m. at the park concession building off Rt. 108. 1/2-day trip.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Bob Sharp. Breakfast hosts are Len & Ruth Warriner. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Tuesday, October 24

MEETING. Patuxent. 7:45 p.m. See September 26 for location.

MEETING. Washington. Mark Garland on Waterfowl. 7:30 p.m., Funkstown Elementary School, Funkstown, MD.

Saturday, October 28

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Potomac River Boat Trip. Take a super pontoon boat tour of the Potomac River with Greg Kearns. The hydrilla mats are feeding ground for many waterfowl during this migratory period. Limit of seven people, Harford Chapter members only. Meet at 5:30 a.m. at the Rt. 152/I-95 Park & Ride. All day, bring lunch. Call Don Soubie, 676-9386, for reservations. The co-leader is Chris Rok.

FIELD TRIP. Washington. Hydrilla & Waterfowl on Potomac River. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Park & Ride lot, I-70 and MD Rt. 65. Contact Ann Mitchell, 432-2021.

Sunday, October 29

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Centennial Park & Lake for fall migrants. Meet at 8 a.m. at the park concession building off Rt. 108. 1/2-day trip.

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Rockburn County Park. Meet at 1 p.m. at park building off Landing Rd. The leaders are Chuck Dupree & Bill Eckert.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Dick Kleen. Breakfast hosts are Joan & Don Chlan. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Friday, November 3

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "Birding in Belize & in Tikal, Guatemala," by Dr. J. William Oberman. Hosts/Hostesses: Al Haury, Kathy Lambert, & Brian Bowie. 8 p.m. at the Anne Arundel County Library, 1410 West Street in Annapolis.

Saturday, November 4

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Waggoners Gap, PA, Hawk Watch. Golden Eagle possible. Leave 8 a.m. Reservations required: call Michelle Wright at 465-6057 for further information and reservations. The leader is Charlie Swift.

(Calendar continued)

Sunday, November 5

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Centennial Park & Lake for fall migrants. Meet at 8 a.m. at the park concession building off Rt. 108. 1/2-day trip.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Jan Reese. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Saturday-Sunday, November 4-5

IRISH GROVE WORKDAY. Irish Grove Sanctuary, Somerset County. Worday, birding, and fellowship with members of many MOS chapters. Anne Arundel chapter members must make reservations with Dotty Mumford, 849-8336, by November 3.

Thursday, November 9

MEETING. Howard. "Maryland Canadas," by Larry Hindman, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Program Manager of Atlantic Flyway Canada Goose Project. 7:30 p.m. at Longfellow Elementary School, Columbia, MD.

MEETING. Talbot. "Birding in Trinidad & Tobago," by Bill Murphy. 7:30 p.m. at the Loyola Federal Savings Bank, Harrison & Goldsborough Sts., Easton, MD.

Saturday, November 11

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Horsehead Farm, Queen Annes Co. Waterfowl and winter residents. Meet at 8 a.m. at the Annapolis Mall Park & Ride lot, 1/2-day trip. The leader is Al Haury, 757-3523.

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Hawk Migration. Good chance for Redtail, Goshawk, and Golden Eagles on this trip to a special location near Hawk Mountain. Depart from the Rt. 24/I-95 Park & Ride in Rock Spring at 6:30 a.m. All day, bring lunch, a lawn chair (if desired), and extra warm clothing. There are no restroom facilities but plenty of woods! The coordinators are Charlie Gant, 398-3554, and Randy Roberson, 676-2735. If weather is inclement this trip will be cancelled.

Sunday, November 12

FIELD TRIP. Howard. Centennial Park & Lake for fall migrants. Meet at 8 a.m. at the park concession building off Rt. 108. 1/2-day trip.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Jan Reese. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Tuesday, November 14

MEETING. Kent. Topic to be announced.

Wednesday, November 15

MEETING. Jug Bay. Topic to be announced. 7 p.m. at Patuxent River Park.

Saturday, November 18

FIELD TRIP. Anne Arundel. Sandy Point State Park, Anne Arundel Co. Perennial favorite for waterfowl and snow bunting. Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Annapolis Mall Park & Ride lot, 1/2-day. The leader is Hal Wierenga, 647-7439.

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Blackwater NWR near Cambridge, MD. Migratory waterfowl, Bald Eagles, other raptors. Check with the leader for meeting time and place; car pooling a possibility for this full-day trip. The leader is Gary Nelson, 897-8916.

Sunday, November 19

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Hydrilla boat trip on the Potomac. Thousands of diving and dabbling ducks, swans, eagles, late shorebirds. Various areas between D.C. and Piscataway Creek in Maryland waters. Open boat—rain jacket and pants essential for wind and spray protection. Dress warmly, bring snack. 7-person limit. Contact the leader, John Bjerke, 963-8525, for reservations and meeting place and time.

FIELD TRIP. Talbot. Morning walk led by Jan Reese. Meet at 7 a.m. at Higgins & Spencer Furniture Co., St. Michaels, MD.

Saturday, November 25

FIELD TRIP. Harford. Susquehanna State Park/Conowingo Dam. If you like to see Bald Eagles this should be the trip! Beginners will enjoy this chance to bird with one of the foremost ornithologists in Harford County. Meet at the Rock Run Mill in Susquehanna State Park at 8 a.m. 1/2-day. The coordinator is Spike Updegrove, 836-2946.

Friday-Sunday, November 24-26

FIELD TRIP. Montgomery. Thanksgiving Weekend at the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Wide variety of geese, ducks, raptors, marsh birds, and late shorebirds and migrant passerines possible. An exellent fall concentration point. Consult the Nov.-Dec. newsletter or call the leader, Claudia Wilds, 333-5769, for details.

November 28

MEETING. Patuxent. 7:45 p.m. See September 26 for location.

The copy deadline for the November/December issue of the *Yellowthroat* is October 1, 1989. Please send chapter activities to:

Norm and Fran Saunders
1261 Cavendish Dr.
Colesville, MD 20904
H: 301-989-9035
W: 202-272-5248

Please send all other material to the editor:

Mark L. Hoffman
313 Fernwood Dr.
Severna Park, MD 21146
H: 301-647-7227
W: 301-974-3195

MARYLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY, INC.

MOS State Membership Dues: Active $6. Two persons at one address, $8. Junior (under 18) $1. Student (full-time) $2. Life. $200. These are the dues for members-at-large. If you wish to join one of the 15 chapters, their active member dues are additional. Contact the appropriate chapter for further information.

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